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AUTHOR Moore, John A.
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents case studies of four middle school preservice teachers' experiences with multicultural education during their approximately 16-week student teaching practicum in the southeastern United States. Student teachers were male and female, aged 21 to 42 years; one was African-American and three were European-American. The study was designed to provide descriptive information as well as to show practical examples of student teachers' multicultural teaching opportunities and lack of opportunities in mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies. Factors that impeded the practice of culturally diverse teaching by these four student teachers included lack of preparation for multicultural teaching in teacher education courses, lack of personal learning experiences, lack of demonstration and guidance in culturally diverse teaching, and lack of encouragement by supervisory and cooperating teachers. Based on findings in this research, it is recommended that more emphasis be placed on genuine and comprehensive multicultural learning experiences, that more connections be presented between comprehensive subject specific content and components of diversity, that multicultural teaching be required as part of the teacher education program, and that student teachers have some degree of autonomy in constructing lessons and learning during the practicum. (Contains 10 references.) (NAV)

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# EMPOWERING STUDENT TEACHERS TO TEACH FROM A MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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John A. Moore, Assistant Professor
School of Integrative Studies in Teacher Education
College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101
(502) 745-3594

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Since educators regard student teaching as the most valuable aspect of teacher preparation, in what ways are student teachers offered opportunities to teach from a culturally diverse perspective? This question formed the structure for inquiring about factors that *support* and factors that *impede* opportunities for student teachers to provide culturally diverse curricula for learners.

This paper discusses cases of four middle school preservice teachers' experiences with multicultural education during their student teaching practicum. The study was designed to provide descriptive information as well as to show practical examples of student teachers' opportunities and lack of opportunities to teach multiculturally. The case studies provide information which is essential for teacher educators, school administrators, and preservice & inservice teachers. These educators are expected to promote human understanding and achieve equity in teaching and learning for all students.

Very few, if any, studies that assess the effectiveness of preservice programs for multicultural education have been undertaken in southeastern communities of the United States. Researchers like Sleeter (1985), and Grant and Secada (1990) point out that most studies on multicultural education have been conducted in midwestern states and findings of such studies have limited generalizability when they are

applied to cultural backgrounds and other states' histories. This southeastern U. S. study will offer an opportunity to compare some findings with the midwestern findings.

The second area of significance is that there is a paucity of research in multicultural education beyond the elementary level (Banks, 1991). This study focuses on identifying middle school student teachers' empowerment (willingness, opportunity, ability, support, encouragement, assertiveness) to teach and relate to students from a multicultural perspective. Donald Eichhorn's (1966) coinage of "transescence" emphasizes the middle years (ages 10-14) or transition (life period from childhood to adolescence) as it relates to social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Teachers of this age group should empower student teachers to include curricula pertaining to the four facets of transescent development when planning learning experiences that promote human understanding and educational equity.

With the exception of social studies, there are not many studies on multicultural education and subject specific content. This study was conducted with the spirit of investigating middle school student teachers' multicultural teaching opportunities and lack of opportunities in math, science, language arts, and social studies.

A fourth significance is the emphasis on detailed description. James Banks (1991) believes that one of the major problems with existing

multicultural studies is that they are not characterized by what Geertz (1973) called "thick description" which allows us to understand setting, context, the nature of multicultural interventions, and the behaviors of the teachers and students.

Sometimes student teachers may feel they do not have enough time to teach from a multicultural perspective. This perception is derived mostly from their knowledge of and experience with narrowly focused curricula that still exist and have been established and enforced by public school administration and policy. Throughout the study, attention is given to ways student teachers are empowered to realize that multicultural teaching requires changing the nature of school curricula and lesson content rather than only requiring more time to include more lessons or extra units of study.

## METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

The four student teachers were the main informants throughout the data collection period, which lasted for about 16 weeks. They practiced their student teaching during the spring of 1993 and represented each of the four core curricular areas. The student teachers' ages ranged from 21 to 42. Among the four student teachers, one was male, one was African-American and three were European- American.

Information was also collected from university supervisors and

cooperating teachers. The selection of these teacher educators was dependent on the major informants' references. Data from them should be included because they oversee and supervise the student teaching experience. Therefore, they establish the breadth of acceptable and unacceptable teacher behaviors for the student teacher.

Transcripts of participant interviews and classroom observations served as primary sources of data, while fieldnotes, the four student teachers' journals, and written evaluations from the cooperating teachers and the university supervisors served as secondary data sources.

Data was analyzed in stages using qualitative techniques. First, the interviews were transcribed and shared with participants for review and/or clarification. Second, information was reviewed to identify recurring themes or patterns. Similar ideas were coded into categories and labeled accordingly . Categories were identified as personal biography, autonomy, reflection, knowledge base, attitudes, academic area, impact of cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and lesson content. These categories were divided into two major themes: factors that *support* and factors that *impede* the practice of culturally diverse teaching by student teachers.

Researchers and writers have used Sleeter and Grant's (1987,1989, 1994) five approaches for multicultural teaching to theoretically ground

further studies and to support the practicality of multicultural education. Goodwin (1994), for example, was interested in midwestern preservice teachers' conceptions and definitions of multicultural education. Moreover, in *At The Essence Of Learning: Multicultural Education*, Geneva Gay (1994) credits Sleeter and Grant's approaches as "a model that can be helpful in matching appropriate multicultural curricular and instructional practices to the developmental readiness levels of students, teachers, and schools" (p.135).

This study is theoretically grounded on the work of Sleeter and Grant . Their first approach, *Teaching the exceptional and culturally different*, includes programs to assimilate students of color into dominant culture and defines multicultural education primarily along racial and ethnic dimensions. A *human relations approach* promotes unity and tolerance for the purpose of developing better understanding and interactions among different groups. *Single-group studies* focus on the contributions and experiences of identified ethnic, gender and social class groups, usually in isolation. *Multicultural education* promotes social structural equality and cultural pluralism by emphasizing respect for and the celebration of cultural diversity through the infusion of a multicutural perspective throughout the curriculum. *Education that is multicultural and social reconstructivist* includes programs that go one step beyond multicultural education approaches by accentuating social action and the

reconstruction of societal norms and structures in order to achieve educational equity.

The Case Studies

What follows is descriptive information that includes brief biographies of the four middle school student teachers and a vignette for each. Each vignette identifies opportunities and\or lack of opportunities to teach from a culturally diverse perspective. Names and other forms of identification have been changed to practice confidentiality.

> **A Math Student Teacher:** Jill Shannan is a 27 year old white middle school student teacher who grew up in a small town with a population of about 600. She attended the only school in her community for eight years before going to a larger high school that served children from eight counties. Jill feels that low socioeconomic level, exposure to an African-American family at an early age, and in later years, traveling to different parts of the United States are her most salient life experiences with other cultures.

> **A Science Student Teacher:** Cindy Howard grew up in a small town that has a population of about 30,000. The 21 year old white middle school student teacher graduated from high school with only 88 other students. Among these high school seniors, only two were African-American and four were Asian-American. Almost all of the students were members of a Protestant religion. Cindy identifies socioeconomic status as the most salient component of cultural diversity in her high school. "There were the higher income families and then you had your lower income families. There were not any in between families, and the two groups there really didn't interact much." As a daughter of a certified public accountant and an elementary school secretary, Cindy points out that a vast majority of her close friends were from higher income families.

A Language Arts Student Teacher: As a 42 year old, Rita Hanson vividly remembers her childhood experiences in school by noting that she attended a one room school for grades 1-8 with a total enrollment of 13 students. "There were two in my grade, including myself. Of course there were no blacks or Hispanics. It was all white. We were all poor country children." Rita reports that traveling to another country, her childhood family life with several siblings, and living in poverty as a child are life experiences that have helped her to relate to cultural diversity.

A Social Studies Student Teacher: Paul Smith lived in the inner city of Greensboro, South Carolina during the first five years of his life. After his father enlisted in the military, Paul moved to Kentucky and lived on a military base in that state. This 21 year old African-American has lived in seven other states and in Germany. Since Paul lived on military bases throughout most of his life, he points out that race and ethnicity, rather than social class, were the most salient components of cultural diversity in the schools he attended.

***"If you're focusing on race, the only thing you can do is count them!"***

When asked about her definition of multicultural education, Jill Shannan paused for about a half a minute, brushed back her short blond hair, pushed her dark round glasses, and said "well [pause again] like teaching with different perspectives and angles. Trying to pull from different experiences. You could take a short analysis of your class and what they are made up of and what type of backgrounds they have, and then try to teach to the angle- to something they [students] would have a angle from."

Jill selected her student teaching site mainly because, in her opinion, the school is up to date with educational reform. Creed Lake Middle

School first opened its doors as an institution for teaching and learning during the 1988-1989 school year. Among the 535 seventh and eighth graders, 20 are African American, 8 are Asian American, 2 are Hispanic and one is native American. All students at Creed Lake live in the school's community which mostly consists of middle to upper class neighborhoods.

The faculty is composed of 29 European American and one African American who is male. There are 8 other male teachers at Creed Lake. Even though the school has a special education program, physically impaired students who live in the district attend another school across the county. Jill has been placed, at Creed Lake, with a cooperating teacher who has taught math for twenty-two years, but has supervised only one other student teacher.

"I like this school and I chose to come here", Jill states. "This is the first school in the area that is fully site based. And they're as far along as can be with reform [educational ]. That's why I requested here, because if it was ever a time to learn it, it would be now. ...It would be good to learn first hand." She points out:

> In this school they [students] are pretty much economically affluent. If someone here continually comes to school without paper or other materials, I will assume that they haven't taken the time to get the paper. They haven't told mom and dad they need paper. Whereas, in another school there might not be any money for paper. So you'd be a little more lenient. I tal ked with a teacher at City Middle School during an earlier field experience. He takes part of his funds to purchase paper, and it just lays on his table. He lets the kids get it as they need it

> and it's not an issue. ...In schools like that you don't require them to have a certain folder. You know, it would be nice to require them, in this school, to keep a math folder. If they were my classes for the year, I would require that they keep their work real nice and neat in a folder rather than cramming it in their books. But in the other school you provide the folders for them or have them make the folders.

Jill appears to be mindful of the socioeconomic differences among Creed Lake and City Middle School. As Gay (1994) and Ladson-Billings (1994) point out, successful teachers of multicultural education understand specific cultural characteristics of ethnic, racial, and social groups, and how culture shapes the behaviors of teachers and students in learning situations.

Creed Lake's "Multicultural Fair" is the first of its kind for the school and the school personnel's major recognition of cultural pluralism during the year of Jill's student teaching. The Fair is held late in the school year for two hours after school. Each of the four Creed Lake interdisciplinary teams or "families" is responsible for an in depth presentation and display of a "major" cultural group in the United States. The cultural groups include African, European, Hispanic. The Asian and Native American cultures are combined because, according to Jill and Creed Lake faculty, "they are smaller subgroups". The families have two weeks to produce their work. The project encourages students to consider the impact their

cultural group has on the local community as well as offer critical thinking about stereotyping, ethnocentrism, and social reconstruction. Jill's family is responsible for the European culture.

Over 900 people who participated were greeted at the front entrance door by students and teachers as they said "hello" in variety of languages and were dressed in traditional clothing of their perspective cultural group. One girl, for example, portrayed an Andean Indian as she modeled her dark blue full skirt, frilly white blouse, dark heavy shaw, gray bowler hat and numerous strands of gold beads. Jill portrayed a German woman. The front foyer was draped with a banner that read "All people, All cultures, All American ". Throughout the school there were, among other things, foods from around the world in the cafeteria; student performances of poetry, music and dances; displays of inventors and inventions from around the world; and African masks and wind chimes, as well as African and Asian batik hangings. There were student writings on the topics : "How would America be different if there had never been slavery?" "What should Americans do to end racism and hate crimes?

What was Jill's role in all of this. Did this experience help her learn anything about teaching from a multiculutral perspective? As a math student teacher, was she encouraged to contribute to the fair? Jill stated, "I haven't talked to Ms. Mays [cooperating teacher] about how we [math teachers] would integrate ideas for our family's cultural group. She gave

me a little interdisciplinary unit that another group had done. I think she' following that format. Jill insists:

> With math, the only thing I see that you could do is population studies. Like what percentage originated from Germany? You'd have to do some type of population study where you could compare and contrast. You could do pie charts, graphs, and things like that. we could do that on our own or in correlation with something they [social studies, language arts, and science teachers in the family] do. They might do something on their own and math might not get too involved. If you're focusing on race, the only thing you can do is count them. I mean, the only thing has to be statistics.

Jill's view fits Bank's (1993) "irrelevant of content argument" when she identifies strict limitations for math as it relates to teaching about cultural diversity. Banks warns us that when multicultural education is conceptualized primarily or exclusively as content, the irrelevant of content argument can be a legitimatized form of resistance. Her perception also reveals a severely limited knowledge of the concept of cultural diversity in general, for she addresses the math teacher's limitations in teaching about race rather than limitations in teaching about a variety of components of culture like gender, social class, physical impairment. At best, Jill focuses heavily on single group studies, with race as a guiding factor.

Jill could have been encouraged to contribute to the Multicultural Fair by having her students focus on mathematical concepts that have European origins and contributions, and how Europe benefited from mathematical concepts that originated from other continents. To help

explain various aspects of oppression in European society today, statistics and computational skills could be used. Jill's students could have compared and contrasted such oppression with that found in American and world society. Jill also missed an opportunity to ask students to utilize statistics and computational skills to help provide suggestions for social action and reconstruction.

*" If I knew how to do it , I would use it."*

Cindy Howard defines multicultural education as:

> Getting students to see the points of view of others to let them know that not everybody is the same. Everybody is an individual. Each person has a way of thinking and a point of view; especially when making a decision about something that is seen [real life]. Multicultural education means helping students see all sides of the situation and then base the decision on that."

This student teacher's subscription to Sleeter and Grant's human relations approach to multicultural education is typical of Goodwin's 1994 findings. Three of the four student teachers in this study subscribe only to one or more of the first three approaches. The preservice teachers in Goodwin's study subscribe to multicultural education as the education of the exceptional or culturally different, as a human relations approach, or as single group studies. Goodwin concludes that preservice teachers believe multicultural teaching and learning focuses on coming to know those defined as *other* and upon affective development. This researcher insists that "none of the three approaches is adequate for achieving equity and

equality because all three fail to deal with the structural inequities inherent in society. If beginning teachers subscribe to these approaches, they run the risk of unwittingly perpetuating the status quo" (p.128).

Cindy's student teaching site was composed of 34 European-American teachers and four African-American teachers. Among the 489 seventh and eighth graders, 119 were African-American, Three Asian- American, 3 visiting the US from Denmark, 1 was Hispanic and 1was Native- American. The socioeconomic levels among her eighth grade science students range from upper class to below poverty, including homeless students. The students at this school for transescents are grouped in accordance with ability and achievement.

Cindy chose to student teach at Trackford Middle School because of the school's proximity to the city area. She has mixed feelings about teaching homogeneously.

> I see a plus and minus in both ways. I'm teaching the two lower classes now. They don't expect anything from themselves because no one else has expected anything from them. They expect to get worksheet after worksheet and not do experiments and let themselves think. You hear the above average classes get excited about some of their stuff and you hear them talking about it in the hall. The lower groups know they are not doing the fun stuff because they are lower. On the other hand, last week teachers in the lounge were talking about how the county schools do not track, but the higher ability students are not challenged because all they do throughout the year is tutor the other students in the class. I understand that it is hindering them. So I don't know. I think tracking is good but I wish teachers would do the same stuff

> with all the classes. If they have to slow down, fine, slow down, but still challenge the students.

During one of her visits to Trackford before student teaching, Cindy wrote the following about black and white students and about tracking there.

> I began to notice that in my classes all black students sit together while all Anglo students sit together. As a whole, the black students seem to lack the motivation to achieve compared to the whites. I have come to this conclusion because during class discussions, for example, the Anglo students generally participate much more than the blacks and ask more academic questions. I believe that much of this is a result of today's society. That is, I feel that the majority of society doesn't expect blacks to achieve, so they don't expect success from themselves. It seems that the way this school groups students is not good because it teaches students to separate themselves into different groups.

In an effort to provide a learning experience that is, in Cindy's opinion, "challenging, real life , and fair for all students" (equitable), Cindy developed a learning activity for all of classes without regard to ability grouping. During an oceanography unit, each class divided into cooperative learning groups.

> I'm going to have all of them [students] do a creative project on oceanography. They will divide into groups and come up with an underwater environment that humans can live in . We talked about everything in the ocean as far as salinity, water pressure, ocean life, and other things. So they are to create a way humans could live under water. It's getting too crowded on earth, so we need to find a solution to a problem. How could humans live in that water pressure? How will they avoid being killed by sharks and other dangerous ocean life? What are other considerations for living permanently under water? I've already kind of explained it to my 'basic' classes. They

> were like-huh? They've never had a chance to do anything like that. And I'm sure when I explain it to the advanced groups, they'll go "oh, OK".

Although Cindy's intentions are to provide similar science learning experiences for all of her students without regard to ability level, she still has different expectations for her various levels of students. She treats the classes differently when she expects the different groups of students to react differently to assignments.

Cindy knows her subject matter very well. Her oceanography project is thoughtful as it relates to science. Another example of her strong knowledge base for science content is her clear and concise presentation to her classes about the phases of the moon as it is seen from earth. She provided clear examples of scientific terms such as waxing, waning, new moon,first quarter moon, the moon's rotation speed. She even called on volunteers to help her demonstrate how the moon revolves around the earth.

Despite this strong knowledge of science content, there is very little multicultural knowledge as it relates to science learning activities when her students created underwater living environments for humans. Cindy could have asked her students to think about and include ways their underwater environments would be rid of human inequality and oppression. During

her moon presentation, she could have included ways the moon influenced the daily life of diverse cultural groups through religion.

After Cindy was informed about these missed opportunities to teach science from a multicultural perspective, she said, "that makes a new angle to it. I like that. See, I would have never thought of doing that unless I read it in a book. That [multiculturalism] just seems kind of strange to get into with science."

When asked if her cooperating teacher and/or university supervisor had ever supported, encouraged, demonstrated, modeled or insisted upon multicultural teaching, Cindy quickly responded with a resounding "no".

> It would really help if they did demonstrate multicultural teaching. It would give me ideas and we could even brainstorm for ideas. If it had never been for you [investigator], I would have never ever thought of it. The experience of student teaching has shown the need for multiculturalism in the classroom. I think it's real important. It's just how to go about doing it is what I am having problems with. If I knew how to do it , I would use it. Just give out ideas [how could someone help?]. I mean ah, look at my lessons and say, 'well if you think about this or that you could do this'. Just somebody criticizing a little bit. I can see how multicultural teaching would capture their interest more because it is more real life. But it's hard sometimes- how to bring an example into science. Some things are easier to talk about in real life situations than others.

***"There are several issues like this that keep me from saying a lot to break down barriers."***

Rita Hanson's language arts classroom is located directly across the hall from Cindy's science classroom. These student teachers' cooperating

teachers are members of the same interdisciplinary team, so Cindy and Rita are interdisciplinary team members and teach the same students.

That Rita and Cindy have an excellent opportunity to teach from an interdisciplinary approach is clearly evident. Both student teachers point out that even though they are aware of such an opportunity and that both of their cooperating teachers would support their efforts in interdisciplinary team teaching, they "can't find the time to plan" for interdisciplinary teaching. Moreover, Rita and Cindy report that they observed no interdisciplinary team teaching practiced by their cooperating teachers throughout the student teaching experience. If these student teachers were encouraged and/or required to teach as a team, they agreed that they would. This lack of experience with interdisciplinary team teaching is similar to Rita and Cindy's lack of experience with multicultural teaching.

The following are Rita's comments about homogeneous grouping at Trackford Middle School:

> Before I came in [student teaching at Trackford] I thought it [tracking] was absolutely always wrong. I still [after some student teaching experience] think it hurts the lower track students more than anybody. I think it does encourage and help the gifted and talented because they are really able to go on and soar and do what they want. I'm thinking it hurts more than helps. They [gifted for example] could excel in heterogeneous classes and, at the same time get experience with students from all backgrounds. But mostly I see a lot of bad right now. [In what ways?] Well, I think once you get tracked you can't get out of it. It's like India's caste system.

> You can not [with emphasis] get out. They say you can , but you can't I don't believe you ever can! The child tells himself 'okay I'm low and I'll always be low.' I don't think the child will ever strive to get out of it. If they were heterogeneously grouped, I believe they could rise above.

When asked about her definition of multicultural education, Rita states:

> Multicultural education is teaching to every culture in a way that takes into account the way they [students] were raised [heritage] so they will understand what you are trying to teach. So many times, since I'm white, I would probably teach and take for granted that everyone agrees with my views... ...My opinion of it [multicultural education] is it needs to be worked on and we need to be aware of it [preservice teachers need to be educated in multicultural teaching]. But at the same time, I don't think we can constrain ourselves completely. We [majority] are not the only ones that have to change. People from other cultures may have to change some too. ...Let's just say the language barrier [for example]. I can't give this information out in English because they [ESL students] don't understand English. I'm going to have to give them a Spanish class. So all their lives they'll go through Spanish classes. They'll never really learn English. We are not preparing them for the real world in America. They need to learn to change their language. They're in America now. They should learn to speak English.

This language arts teacher appears to be aware of the fact that she, as well as other preservice teachers, need to learn more about multicultural education and how to transform their curricula. However, her attitude towards some components of multicultural education (ESL students, for example) needs to be challenged. For example, her teacher educators could point out the National Council of Teachers of English (1978) recognition that second-language acquisition is a gradual developmental

process and is built on student's knowledge and skill in their native language.

Rita points out that she has planned her own lessons from the very beginning of her student teaching experience, but at first felt constrained in her selection of teaching content in her cooperating teacher's classroom. "I think the longer I teach, the more I will have freedom to choose my own [content]. I'm beginning to push a little. I've constructed my own lessons from day one but I teach what she [cooperating teacher] wants taught."

Rita comments on her experiences with multicultural education as a student teacher when she states:

> No one has ever encouraged or modeled teaching from a multicultural perspective; not in conversation, nor on my evaluations. I think through some modeling and demonstration [How could you be helped]. I think most student teachers are not really sure what's expected in that area [culturally diverse teaching]. I know just as much as anybody else here [student teachers at Trackford] knows and no one is really sure... ...Are you [investigator] asking me am I teaching so that all students can be reached? [How do you go about teaching and relating to teachers from a multicultural perspective?] I do try to do that. Like this Holocaust unit we're doing. We are having someone report on the German side; how they felt and what their views were; also the Jewish side. So we try to look at both sides. The other day I was teaching 'Go Down Moses'. They called Harriet Tubman 'Go Down Moses' because of the way slaves knew she was on the plantation when they heard the song Go Down Moses. I explained to the class that the song was an old Negro spiritual. Several of the girls got upset

> and said 'you said negro'. I said, 'that's what they were called. They didn't call them black or African American spirituals.' There seems to be a sensitivity in saying the word 'negro', so I
>
> think some of us [teachers] are reluctant to say anything because we don't want to offend anybody. Another reason I don't attempt to break down the racial barrier is because, for example, a black boy wanted to get off the school bus [during Rita's bus duty] and I would not let him. He asked 'it's because I'm black isn't it?' I said, 'well, no really it isn't'. There are several instances like this that keep me and I guess some of the others from really trying to say a lot and break down barriers.

Rita's comments reveal that she is at least thinking about cultural diversity as it relates to both curriculum content and teacher-student relations. Her lesson on Harriet Tubman is aligned with Grant and Sleeter's (1994) single group studies approach, and her holocaust unit focuses on the multicultural approach. She handled the "Go Down Moses" incident rather well. The girls' lack of knowledge of the term "Negro Spirituals" could indicate their limited opportunities to learn from a culturally diverse perspectives. Rita provided a rationale for using the term rather than evading the issue. This teacher behavior relates to Ladson-Billings' (1994) stance that teachers identify ethnic and racial differences to see students more on an individual basis as well as to broaden their abilities to meet the educational needs of the students.

The bus duty incident is another indicator of Trackford students' lack of

multicultural learning. Moreover, Rita's reluctance to "break down the racial barrier", because of fear of offending someone, is typical of many educators' reasoning to resist multicultural teaching and learning. Rita should understand that the boy on the school bus probably had his attitude about racism because students in the school are not challenged to think about, discuss, or react to multicultural issues. This student teacher should also understand that multicultural teaching and learning are indeed about, among other things, breaking down cultural barriers.

*"That's if you're lucky to even include multiculturalism in math."*

The social studies and math have always held Paul's Smith's interest most. He points out that he had at first applied to student teach middle school math, but changed to social studies because "you can do more things with social studies..." ..."Social studies lends itself well to multiculturalism, whereas math requires more planning and thought. That's if you're lucky to even include multiculturalism in math." Paul's view toward multiculturalism and math is similar to that of Jill Shannon's (math student teacher) and Cindy Howard's (science student teacher). All three student teachers conceptualize multicultural education to be primarily or exclusively content Banks warns us that such a conception can become a legitimized form of resistance to multicultural education across the curriculum.

Joseph Alford Middle School, where Paul student teaches,

accommodates fifth through eighth grade with an enrollment of 785. Because of the proximity to a large military base, several of Alford's students are children of retired military personnel who choose to remain in the area. Among the student body , 175 were African American, 33 Hispanic and 40 Asian American.

After one week, Paul was teaching two American history classes. He reflects on teaching materials and cultural diversity when he states:

> Since I've been student teaching I realize that a lot of teaching materials only provide one or two viewpoints on a particular topic. I've noticed this mostly from going through the textbook and reading the chapter titles in the table of contents. ...I remember you [investigator] talking about infusing aspects of cultural diversity into the lessonto make learning content more real and meaningful for students. I got the text and I asked myself, 'what does it say about different aspects of culture?' I was just looking at race and gender. You flip through the text and it basically talks about white men. I usually go to the library and use other sources to add to the text I use in my classroom..

This social studies student teacher appears to be mindful of multiple perspectives in teaching content, but as mentioned earlier, Paul believes it would be much more difficult to teach math in a culturally pluralistic manner.

Visits from Paul's university supervisor tells us that the teacher educator provided support and praise for some of Paul's teacher behaviors. However, none of the behaviors related directly to multicultural education, even though some of Paul's practices were in

line with acceptable practices for multicultural teaching. For example, the university supervisor identified rapport, knowledge of subject matter, enthusiasm for teaching, and innovative approaches to instruction as Paul's overall strengths when he presented to his eighth graders a writing assignment that focused on rewriting America's history in a way that prevents slavery.

Lack of empowerment in multicultural teaching for Paul can also be seen when his teacher educators (university supervisor and cooperating teacher) accepted his lesson titles such as "Oregon Trail" and "settlement in Texas". Such titles are culturally narrow when focusing on the human condition, and they encourage students to consider and accept one perspective in lesson content.

Conclusions

Factors that impede the practice of culturally diverse teaching by student teachers in this study include:

1. Teacher preparation before the student teaching semester is extremely fragmented. Such fragmentation can be seen both outside and within the school of education. All four student teachers in this study identified only two courses that even touched on diversity in teaching and learning in their teacher education program, while a history course represented the only class outside of the school of education that made connections between cross-cultural understanding.

2. Lack of learning experiences and the lack of appropriate instructional programs that emphasize cultural pluralism contributed to the student teachers' weak knowledge bases in comprehensive knowledge about cultural diversity and subject matter.

3. Even though there was demonstration, guidance and emphasis on some aspects of teaching like classroom management, there was no demonstration and guidance in culturally diverse teaching for the student teachers.

4. The university supervisor and the cooperating teacher can impede

student teachers' opportunities to teach from a culturally diverse perspective. This conclusion supports the theory that student teachers are responsive to teaching and learning ideas when they are promoted by someone in charge. For example, one student teacher's statement, " I teach what she ( cooperating teacher) wants taught" and another's, "You do walk the fine line when you're student teaching, and if I did not give homework every night , I would certainly be walking that line" points out that the student teachers were responsive to guidelines that were set by their cooperating teachers. If teacher educators promoted culturally diverse teaching during student teaching with the same level of energy and emphasis as they do other practices, student teachers would be offered more opportunities to teach from a culturally diverse perspective.

Factors that would support diversity in teaching by student teachers include:

1. School of education courses and teacher education programs should not be fragmented, but should be consistent and continuous in providing learning experiences for preservice teachers. This way student teachers can gain a comprehensive understanding of content and process in cultural diversity.

2. Subject area courses offered by the university such as Race and Ethnic Relations in the United States, Latino Studies, Women Studies, African American Studies, Native American Studies, and the Origin of Math

and Science Concepts would give student teachers a more comprehensive knowledge base.

3. The presence of a university supervisor and and/or cooperating teacher who: 1)is committed to diversity in teaching and learning; 2)provides autonomy and guidance for the student teacher; 3)encourages reflection on culturally diverse teaching is a strong factor in supporting multicultural teaching opportunities for student teachers.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and the literature review, the following recommendations are made for practical application in teacher education programs.

1. Place more emphasis on genuine and comprehensive multicultural learning experiences. This should strengthen the student teacher's knowledge base of cultural diversity in teaching and learning as they enter the field of student teaching.

2. Present more connections between comprehensive subject specific content and components of diversity. All teacher educators throughout the university community need to extend a more authentic and concerted effort in providing real life teaching and learning experiences.

3. Since student teachers are responsive to ideas that are promoted by someone in charge , teacher education programs should *require*

multicultural teaching practices during the official evaluation process.

4. Teachers need autonomy in constructing their own lessons and opportunity to reflect in order to take control of their own learning and professional development. This includes learning about and practicing culturally diverse teaching.

5. Even though data analysis shows us that the four student teachers were not encouraged to teach multiculturally, more research is needed to determine if teacher educators who do encourage multicultural education provide more culturally diverse teaching opportunities for student teachers.

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